

**Statutory Council on Blindness Council Meeting  
Madison Concourse Hotel  
December 8-9, 2014**

Monday, December 8, 2014

Present: Doug Tikkanen, Jo Ann Gustavson, Troy Hergert, Jo Grove, Janet Dickey, Lee Young, Tom Langham.

Guests: Kim Young, Enid Glenn

Absent: Bill Gallik, Roberto Torrez, and Ana Detert.

Doug called the meeting to order at 19 a.m.

BEP Program: Laurie Lang and Ken Walzer were with us via phone conferencing. Some of the information passed to us during this session included:

- 25 sites were sent out for new operators. These sites could be taken on by existing operators, or new operators could be found to take over these locations.
- Cafeteria sites have more expenses than vending machine locations.
- The Operators are trying to find out how BEP operators could increase their earnings so they are in line with the national levels of earnings for the BEP program.
- Some BEP operators are satisfied with their income and are not interested in growing their business.
- Our goal is to improve communications between the SCOB and the BEP program representatives.
- It was clear from talking to Laurie and Ken that there were differences between what the Randolph-Sheppard Act said and what was happening with the BEP program in WI.
- Numbers from Ken indicated a loss of 2 vendor sites and a gain of 2 vendor sites for a net zero gain for the operators. The gained sites were actually the result of efforts from the BEP operator alone.
- Doug would like to put together a document showing the differences between the Randolph -Sheppard Act says and what the BEP's way of doing things. And find out why there are differences. The Randolph-Sheppard Act governs the BEP program.

OBVI Report Given by Tom Langham. For the 2014 Federal year, 1080 individuals were eligible for Independent Living services.

- OBVI is looking at increasing their staff
- Staff was at the Farming Days of WI and saw over 2,000 individuals in 2 days
- Provide services to all populations in the 72 counties in WI.
- They are expanding in 2015. They will work with deaf and hard of hearing individuals.
- One of their goals is to return calls within 10 days.

DVR Report given by Enid Glenn and Suzanne : Enid Glenn is with the Bureau of Management Services; Suzanne is a Counselor from Milwaukee. She helps train new Counselors.

- There are no additional counselors to handle new clients.
- The emphasis of DVR is on the job training. That means to find an employer willing to hire the client, and to provide on the job training
- There is no waiting list for categories 1 and 2. DVR uses a 3 category system. Category 1 & 2 include the people who have 4 or more serious limitations. Category 2 includes clients with up to 3 serious limitations.
- Business Service Consultants reported 676 hires from October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014.
- Enid presented statistics regarding employment numbers.
- She stated that it was not real accessible or easy to obtain.

<u>Disability Type</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
ADHD	177	173
AODA	48	67
Autism	164	236
Blind/Visual	72	115
Brain injuries	85	86
Cognitive	369	409
Congenital/brain injury	64	80
Deaf/HH	263	259
Learning Disabilities	470	536
Mental Illness	708	842
Orthopedic	680	774

Other	368	431
Other Physical	372	407
Totals	3,840	4,415

- Most of the visually impaired/blind clients who found employment did not find full-time employment. They did not make enough money to get off of their benefits and be self-suporting.
- FY 2013 1 individual obtained full time employment and FY 2014 1 individual obtained full time employment per the numbers provided by Enid Glenn December 8<sup>th</sup> 2014.

A motion was made by Jo Grove and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lee Young to break/adjourn for lunch. All Ayes. Motion passed.

Doug called the meeting back in session at 1:05 p.m.

#### Public comments

- There were no public comments.
- In an attempt to be more proactive, DHS will update out SCOB feedback page on it's website, and tie it to OBVI page to collect data. SCOB would like this to happen prior to 2 weeks before our next Council meeting. It is urgent that the webpage be updated to show current membership information. The SCOB website is [www.blindnesscouncil.wisconsin.gov](http://www.blindnesscouncil.wisconsin.gov)
- The website address should be changed to Statutory of the Blind.

#### Update on Membership

- It has been decided that a criminal background check will be done on new members prior to their approval.

Minutes: A motion was made by Janet and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jo to approve the September 8 Council minutes. All Ayes. Motion passed.

Governor's Report given by Lee Young: Lee gave a presentation on the BEP program at this meeting.

- Lee e-mailed her report to us. The council members will look it over and ask any questions at tomorrow's meeting.

### Physical Disabilities Council

- The question was asked if the information from this council is important and beneficial to us. We decided it was.

### WI Council of the Blind report given by Jo Grove

- Jo Grove is ending her term on this council.
- She can still get the report from the council.
- She reported that the council is in good financial standing.
- The Council of the Blind started as a legislative council.

### NEB Report given by Lee Young

- Lee will e-mail the members her report, and we can ask any questions we have at tomorrow's meeting.

### Subcommittee members (the 1<sup>st</sup> name is the head of that committee)

- Executive: Doug, Janet, Jo, Jo Ann, and Tom
- Employment: Doug, Roberto, Lee, Janet, Bill, Jo, Janet
- Recruitment: Doug, Lee & Tom
- Transportation: Jo Ann, Janet, Bill, Roberto
- Public Relations/Information Access: Troy, Janet/Jo

### Employment issues:

- How do disabled people answer the disability question on job applications?
- Do we answer "yes"? Or do we answer "no"?
- Will employers use our "yes" answer to not interview us and give us a chance?

A motion was made by Lee and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jo to adjourn. All ayes. Motion passed.

Tuesday, December 9, 2014

Present: Doug, Jo Ann, Jo, Lee, Janet, Troy, Tom, and Ana.

Guests: Kim Young

Absent: Bill

A motion was made by Janet and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jo call the meeting to order.

All Ayes. Motion passed.

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 a.m.

#### BEP Program:

- Janet will prepare a summary of how BEP determines net income. She will e-mail the document to us.
- What definition is BEP using for net income?
- Definitions should be consistent.
- Other states are using a different definition for net income; allowing different expenses to be included in net income
- Janet will obtain the definitions from other states for net income.

#### Employment Outlook

- Currently there is 70% unemployment for the blind community. This figure does not include individuals who are underemployed.
- If a company has \$60,000 in Government contracts, and more than 50 employees, ODEP says that the company needs to have disabled or vets making up 7% of their workforce.
- Most of the blind workforce make minimum wage or less.
- Doug would like to see a job description of the Business Consultant Services
- Right now, consumers are not allowed to see the positions that the BSC have found. The BSC talk to the consumer's DVR counselors. It is the counselor that decides if the consumer should be considered for that position. We would like to suggest to DVR that the consumer should have direct access to these positions, and decide for themselves if they would like to apply for the position.
- There should be a central site where consumers can go to see these positions.

A motion was made by Doug and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Janet to take a break. All ayes. Motion passed.

#### Committees

- Recruitment ---Jan. 6, 2015 @ 9 a.m. This meeting is scheduled to last 3-minutes.
- Executive-----Tuesday, January 6, 2015 @ 9:30 a.m.

- Transportation---Monday, January 5, 2015 @ 9 a.m.  
Discover what incentives will different transportation companies provide for blind/visually impaired persons?
- Public Relations—Monday, January 12, 2015 @ 9 a.m.

### Considerations

- Do we want a log for the SCOB?

### THINGS TO DO

Prepare a bio of less than 500 words

Individuals are optional

Due by December 31, 2014

### LEGISLATIVE DAY

- We need a flier to include with the packets when we talk to legislators. This should be done by the first week in February.

### UPDATE OF JO'S PROJECT

- Her project is taking longer than she ever thought it would.
- Her proposal is almost complete.
- Jo stated that this has been an eye opening experience.
- She wanted to include all the data she collected. But there was no way she could do that. The report has stringent page limitations.

A motion was made by Jo Ann and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lee to adjourn. All Ayes. Motion passed.